

What is the Batteries Directive?

The Batteries and Accumulators
(Placing on the Market) Regulations 2008



The Batteries and Accumulators Directive came into force on the 26th September 2008. It is a European Directive which aims to control the use of mercury and cadmium in batteries. It also states that batteries must be marked appropriately and can be readily removed from appliances for end of life disposal. The Regulations apply to all types of batteries and those placing them on the market. In the UK this part of the Directive is implemented through the Batteries and Accumulators (Placing on the Market) Regulations (SI2008 No. 2164).

A **battery** or **accumulator** is defined as any source of electrical energy generated by direct conversion of chemical energy. It consists of one or more primary (non-rechargeable) battery cells or of one or more secondary (rechargeable) battery cells.



The Regulations use certain descriptions to categorise batteries in order to distinguish which parts of the legislation are applicable to them. These categories are as follows:

Industrial Battery: Any battery or battery pack which is:

- i) designed exclusively for industrial or professional uses, or;
- ii) used as a source of power for propulsion in an electrical vehicle, or;
- iii) unsealed but is not an automotive battery, or;
- iv) sealed but is not a portable battery.

Portable Battery: Any battery or battery pack which is sealed, can be hand-carried without difficulty and is neither automotive nor industrial.

Button Cell: Any small, round, portable battery or accumulator which has a diameter greater than its height and is used for special purposes such as hearing aids, watches and back-up power.

Automotive Battery: Any battery used for automotive starter, lighting or ignition power.



The Batteries and Accumulators Regulations place the following requirements on those placing batteries on the European Market:

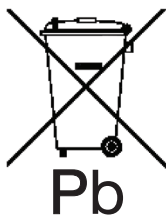
- Batteries placed on the market must not contain the hazardous substances at above the maximum permitted concentration values.
- Products must be designed in such a way that the battery can be readily removed when it comes to the end of its life allowing it to be easily and appropriately recycled.
- The battery or accumulator must be marked with the crossed out wheeled bin symbol which should be printed clearly, visibly and indelibly.



The Regulations restrict the use of mercury and cadmium in batteries to very low percentages.

Where permitted, any battery containing more than this amount of a hazardous substance must be marked with the crossed out wheeled bin symbol and the chemical symbol of the element it contains. Lead, above certain limits, is also included in the marking requirements.

Below is an example of the marking for a battery containing lead.



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More detailed information about the Regulations is available on our website:

www.rohs.gov.uk/batteries

The Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) is the policy lead for the Batteries and Accumulators Regulations in the UK:

www.bis.gov.uk/sectors/sustainability

